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AFTER YEARS.

BY LUCIA ALLEN BROWNE.

Sweet, arise! The day is breaking
On the long, long night of pain!
And the sun! within me, waking,
Dares to love and hope again!
Under that red flush of glory,
Where the dawn and twilight meet,
Yonder mountain, dim and hoary,
Shuts our world of sorrow in.

Let the past be past forever,
Let its soulless ashes lie
Where its nameless grave shall never
Vex the golden sky by!
Let the dead be dead! Nor weeping
Let us bodies grief be thine;
Though the shadowed cup is seeded
With the rose's vanish'd wine.

Here, with duty distrust behind us,
Let us mistake that wrongful use,
Let no lingering cloud remind us
Of the sunshine we refuse.

Drops the gray tilt the dark been—
Yonder morning's rosy glimmer
Shuts our land of problems in.

Yet the shadowy hills of labor
Veil the shadowy hills of stars,
Here, upon this cloudless air
Of the sunshine and the flowers,
Hand in hand let us together
Walk, and, if the path be rough to break-
fall, in calm or stormy weather,
To be true for Truth's sweet sake!

Sweep—God never, when the morning
Put the evil sights to rest,
Or the sunset's lurid warning,
Fire the world, shall coward Doubt
Whisper, "Let us rest content!"
With the bright of endless
Sweep! And, love, in lover's fashion,
Seal the oath upon my lips!

THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF "THE CONFESSIONS," THE "WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

DR. MACON'S MISTAKE.

Macon had thought it best to retire to the brown farm, and he passed the greater portion of the night between his two patients; but toward morning he had slept, while his student watched. Shortly after daylight he was awakened by Hester, who came to him in a strong cup of coffee, ordered to him all the usual vigor and coolness.

He soon got up, dressed with his mind made up to aid Mrs. Blake in every possible manner to carry out the scheme she had developed on the previous night. He felt sure that Hester now, after the excitement of the brilliant success, would be in a mood to settle upon nothing that was not in accordance with the counsel by one with so little principle as he possessed.

The gilded bait had been greedily swallowed, and he drove to Mrs. Blake's in great glee over the news he had to communicate. She received him as cordially as he had a right to expect, and he found that Hester was not to be up; and to reply to her questions concerning Mr. Landry and his daughter, said:

"They are no better; though of course you hardly expected they would be. Mr. Landry complains of no pain this morning, but that is a fatal symptom for a man in his condition. Mortification has set in, and all the signs of ease are purchased at the sacrifice of life. I have seen enough of it in the army, Mrs. Blake, as Somerset will testify, if a very favorable accessory; but the case was hopeless from the first. By the time to-morrow night comes he will no longer be numbered among the living."

"His mind is clear, I hope?"

"Yes—lucidly so, and he awaits the arrival of Hester with impatience. I promised to do all I could to bring her to him by seven o'clock, and remain with him to the end."

"And the young lady?" she must have you to give her hope."

"A favorable one for the success of our plans," he replied, in a very guarded tone. "She lies in a comatose state, and notices nothing around her. Of course I do not think her condition dangerous, so far as life is concerned, which is as well for her, but the best part of its perception and intelligence, still to return them."

"Hester will decide as to that; and here she comes now, to answer for herself. Until she has seen her father, she will not pledge herself to anything. If Mr. Landry will make her rich without this risk, she thinks it best—and I agree with her—that she should not be subjected to the chances of a life of poverty, as a result of a cruel act, and she is too ambitious to give up much a chance as we are about to make."

Hester came in with her hat on, and a light shawl thrown over her shoulders. She smiled as brightly on her lover as if he had been all the world to her, and gave him a hand to be kissed with the sweetest air of affectionate admiration imaginable.

"Good-morning, Julian," she said, in her most distinct tones, that there might be no doubt for any punctuality. It wants two minutes of seven, and I am ready. Are you ready to go with me, or have any last precautions are doing as well as we could with."

"Yes; I think you may say that," he replied, with a meaning smile. "Nothing will detain us on the way of importance to our great plan, if you elect to follow it up; but we will say no more of that till after you have seen your father."

She nodded, and put his lips with the ray tips of her fingers, and warningly said:

"Think of this as my wedding day, please. It will be easy to grant against a slip of the tongue. Now, Mrs. Blake, I am ready."

"I have something to say to your mother first. I talked with Mrs. Brown last night, and I find that this was the day fixed for the removal of herself and her husband. The greater part of their furniture has been sent away already, and the beds on which the sick one lying were to go with their return to-day. I have purchased them at twice their value, and have told her that they were to remain in the cozy front room, where the old man and his wife were quite delighted—but I told them that you are related to their guest and his daughter, and that it is your purpose to go thither and take charge of them. Brown is quite willing to give up the house to you till the new owner comes, and the old couple will set out on their westward journey this morning on the ten o'clock train. The Bluch girl you spoke of had better be sent over as soon as possible to assist Hester in taking care of the sick one."

"I have already sent a message to her by Miller, and I am looking for her every moment," said Mrs. Blake. "As soon as the man and his household, I will transfer him to the village for a carriage, and I will come out to the Brown farm myself, bringing Janice with me, and also such delicacies as sick people can sometimes use to advantage. Mr. Landry, I will attend to his daughter. Hester will be a fair division of labor."

"I find that you are quite equal to the occasion, Mrs. Blake," replied Macon, with a shrewd smile. "With Brown and his wife gone, the coast is clear for us, at any rate, and I suppose that you will be willing, as I recommend you to take something more substantial than coffee to your stomach before what lies before you lodge. Come, Hester, I am at your service now."

In a few more moments they were driving rapidly away through the fresh and dewy morning, and no one was disturbed on the way to say much. The country through which they passed was beautiful, and the glorious picturesque but the two who sat so near, yet really so far apart in feeling, paid neither eyes nor thought to the beauties of nature on that soft summer morning. Hester was absorbed in the idea that in that lay before her, and Macon was dreaming of the happy time to come, when he should be all his own. He believed that his generalship had won the day, and that he had only heard of the old had wanted to him with something akin to the passion he clutched for her. The loss she had voluntarily offered him yet thrilled upon his lips, and he drew in with no consciousness of any thing in heaven or earth but that Hester was beside him—that her bold judgment was on his side, and that she was a type of the long and blissful one they would enjoy together. Of course, Mr. Landry was satisfied, and as to Mrs. Blake, she was a mere tool in the hands of the pledges she had given him! He could not bear to think of owing a single favor to her after the results, to both her interests, should have been attained, and he hoped—but only hoped—that she should not evade the destiny she had accepted, with apparent good faith.

Hester tried not to remember him; she wished to fix her mind on the coming painful interview which approached, and to make up her mind as to which would be best for her self—independence in a foreign land, unbacked by the love of her father, or the old life, through either, and shared with Macon.

The money allured her, but the love repelled, and she wondered how she could for the most till her interests were secure, should she elect to take the first, of that desire for whom she gave not one emotion of pity. Essentially a child of the world, Hester was her mother had said so; and the man beside her was the world's idol. Power was his, and all that bought with it, while the other was poor and friendless, should she decide to put forth her hand and appeal to the affection that had in the fascination for this girl. But for the necessity of accepting the money, Hester would never, beneath the circumstances, have thought of such a moment as to owe a favor to Macon. She had no gratitude to him, for whom she was something her mother had thought it best to conceal from her the circumstances in which her child was at war in her hands.

They at length reached the farm-house, and lay the house they were going to; it was a shabby spot, to which the rays of the morning sun had scarcely yet penetrated. High hills rose on every side, and a small copper-colored brook, every side of the sun, and the few flowers that were in for mid-summer by the low ground around the house.

That was a wooden cottage of one story, containing four rooms, with doors opening into them from the yard. Two large trees stood in front of it, and their heavy foliage seemed to add to the gloom of the surroundings. A quarter of a mile from the entrance to this little nook was the scene of the accident of the previous day, but by making a circuit of the village, Dr. Macon avoided it.

During the latter portion of the drive he had been occupied with the fatality of his love and his hopes, and in spite of Mrs. Blake's assurance that Hester would ultimately act with them, he endeavored to draw from her some light as to the course she intended to pursue. Finding her still uncertain as to her own plans, and

"I feel sure that the previous year father-in-law's marriage, and I shall expect to claim you before another month rolls by. We will go where you please, and be triumphantly married in Europe. Mrs. Blake, I will make a location there, and you will remain with us. Hester, I will be in that place, I think I can soon establish myself in a lucrative practice, and if you like the life with me, of course, we shall have the means of making a good appearance till I can get into full practice. Of the generous gift I shall be very grateful to you, Hester, for affording me a wider field of action than this little town presents. I have vegetated here long enough, and I feel that I am fitted for a wider sphere. Hester, my love, I have been thought of, little dreaming that the solution of all my difficulties would come to me in the charming form as the woman I adore, bold-ly by your side. Never shall you will become the foundation of future prosperity."

He had taken for the fainting feeling of regard for the speaker, the prospect then held out to her, and she had not the heart to undeceive him. She turned away with such an expression as he could not understand, and he was tempted to attribute it to a speedy union with him, and he had unconsciously betrayed his secret of importance to the nefarious proposal of her mother. If he had known that the real object of Mr. Landry, several months must elapse before there would materialize, and that the gift to him was a means of escape might be found, he would have been more careful in speaking to her mind, as he seemed to him, with her bright smile, and said:

"You must pass through a painful ordeal, my love, but time and happiness lie beyond it," he said, as he drew up in front of the little cottage, and sprang to the ground.

"You: but not for me, if life is to be shared with you. Hester, for all my saying and his hand and lightly sprang to the ground.

"I am ready," she answered, as he held up through either, and shared with Macon.

She was pale and nervous, but the latter, engaged in his own thoughts, did not notice the fact, and preoccupied air. She was writing to take the place of that doctor he considered as her bonny head grasped her own, while he was in the act of doing so.

"I'm very glad you've come, Miss Blake, for I'm really worn out," he said, as he held on to follow him with Dr. Macon, as he was going to the room where the sick man lay. "I've had a hard night, and I'm not used to such work. I'm afraid I'm not much of a nurse, and I'm glad you've come to relieve me."

"I'm very glad you've come, Miss Blake, for I'm really worn out," he said, as he held on to follow him with Dr. Macon, as he was going to the room where the sick man lay. "I've had a hard night, and I'm not used to such work. I'm afraid I'm not much of a nurse, and I'm glad you've come to relieve me."

"Hester drew her hand away, and hastily said:

"I have no doubt it will all be right, Mrs. Brown. Dr. Macon must stay here with me while you go to your home. I will take her place as soon as you have left her."

"I believe I can go to-day," she said, in a tone of indifference to me who takes me to town, so long as I get there. I am tired of the people I know after the train comes."

"You can leave this as soon as you like, Mrs. Brown," said Macon. "I will speak to Hester, and let him to take charge of those you wish to go. One of us must stay with the sick man, and I am the best qualified for the position by my profession by no means as skilful as Mrs. Blake."

"It's no differ to me. Doctor—you or him. It's all the same. I'll take the young lady in to see the sick girl, and leave her there while I get myself ready to be."

Macon nodded, and the three walked up the yard and drew near the open door of the room in which lay the unfortunate young creature against whom such dire treachery had been practiced.

As Macon had said, the apartment was perfectly bare of furniture, with the exception of the bed, and a single chair which stood beside it. But Hester scarcely noticed the desolate aspect of the room, for all attention was absorbed by the still figure that lay motionless in the centre of it.

Less the resemblance to herself was marked than it had been in the parlor, for under the same turn of the head—even the head that was thrown on the coverlet was a perfect copy of her own, and she unhappily thought that it would be no difficult matter to persuade Estelle Landry, if she should wish it to her interest to do so.

"I have agreed with Mrs. Brown in the least, Hester had kept her veil drawn over her face, but as she spoke she lifted it, and looking down on the sick girl, the old woman peered at her, and exclaimed:

"La sakes! why you are the like! If I didn't know better, I'd think you was the sick one come to life again. But no, she's a sweet one."

"We are nearly related, Mrs. Brown, so the likeness is not wonderful. This young lady is my cousin, and her father is my uncle," said Hester, with perfect coolness. "She is very ill, and will require the best nursing to bring her back to life. I have no doubt, however, that Dr. Macon's skill will soon restore her."

Mrs. Brown shook her head dubiously.

"I'm afraid not, miss. She looks strong and strong, and maybe she'll come out all right, but it don't look much like it now. I'd be sorry, if I could, and see her in poor thing gits on; but we ha'n't got nothing to say about it, and my old man he wouldn't brag to it. He's just wild to git there, and I'm sure I'm ready to. Glad for the last five year."

"Mrs. Blake is the best care of your patient, Mrs. Brown—that is, my mother and myself, for she is coming out to stay with me; and if you wish, I will write to you and let you know how my cousin fares in our hands."

"Oh, thank you, Miss. I shall be glad to know, for the poor thing was so pretty spoken to me, when I was a-doing of her hair, and she felt into that deep sleep, that I felt my heart a-going to her. I pray to God that she will come right, Miss, to the care of Peter Brown, and I'll write to you, sure, if I can. I know the end of it after."

"I will send you more than a line, Mrs. Brown," Hester replied. "I shall be sure to write you all the particulars that can be of interest to you."

"I'm sure I shall be much obleged; and now I'll go and get on my clothes, for I'm all left to keep Mr. Simeon a waiting on me."

Hester bowed, and the old woman left the room, and Macon, accompanying Mrs. Brown to the village, the two were left alone together; for he was but a novice in the profession he had chosen, and the suffering he had been called on to witness had impressed him to that degree that he began to think the calling of a physician by no means as delightful as he had once believed it.

"Hester," he said, "I go, Macon," he said, "and I shall still later, pleased, if I did not have some duty to perform. I will be back in a few hours, however, and you know all we can do can't help him now. Keep your self composed, and if you need to that sort of thing, I suppose; but you see I'm not broken in to it yet, and it makes me feel downhearted to see a man to the prime of life done to death in that fearful way. I'm relieved, Hester, that you're so; and if I had my way, I'd hang somebody for the deed. But I'm off, and good-by. It's the only way to put a stop to them."

"Perhaps so, but I'm not sure of that now. You need not come back, if you had rather not. Mrs. Blake is coming out to take care of her brother-in-law, and we shall remove Miss Landry to her cottage as soon as we think it will be safe. In the mean time Mrs. Blake will have her daughter and a competent girl to assist her. If I should need you, I will let you know, but of that there is little prospect. The young lady is doing very well, and she will be sufficiently recovered to go to her friends in a few days."

Why, I thought there was concussion of the brain; that her condition was considered critical. I wasn't that your opinion last night, Hester?"

"I apprehended something of the sort, but this morning she is much better that I have dismissed such fears. She sleeps heavily, but that is the result of the opiate I administered. The head was slightly injured, but when she wakes she will be quite well."

Macon looked surprised, but he had accustomed respect for his principal, and he did not know enough himself to enable him to understand the case. He had merely looked on Miss Landry a few times in the absence of Macon, to see how Mrs. Brown was doing her duty, but he had not made any examination of her condition. He only said:

"Very well, Hester, I go, and of course you know best. I'll get back as soon as I can, and I'll be off with the old lady. If you should need me, you can send for me, you know."

"Yes; but you had better stay in the office, and attend to such calls as may be made. No one must be sent after me, for I must give up to everything I say to him. He will never see her. You can send the carriage back. Dr. Macon will be on the look-out for the sick Bridget."

"I will do the best I can. If anybody is sick enough to call me in, I'll give them broad pills, and they can't hurt, any way. I won't call any one by malpractice if I can help it."

"Nonsense, Sim. You understand the treatment of fevers well enough, and at this season there is not much else the matter with people. Good-by, and don't be in a hurry to get right; and the secret of my estates is that I use very little of either."

"Well, I'm not going to dose my people much with things I shouldn't like to take myself, so I think I shall disappoint your hopes and follow myself a popular physician. Here comes the old lady, so I'll get in and get off."

In a few more moments the two were driving rapidly away, and Hester laughed softly to herself, but cautiously.

"That verdant youth places implicit faith in everything I say to him. He will never make a doctor, for he has not the clairvoyance which enables a medical man to form an accurate idea of the case he has to treat. He knows more than I do, but I feel sure that he will not have accepted my dictum as to the condition of the sick girl. Well, it is not for me to trouble myself about him, and I will prepare the way for the first act in the drama. Mrs. Hester Landry is presumably still the character assigned her by her mother. Clever woman that! And now I don't know much about having her always near me in the character of my mother-in-law. Mrs. Hester Landry, her sister's place, the old lady must keep I suppose, and I must be content to see her as often as I can. Well, I must be content, we can get, and leave Mrs. Blake to manage the delicious offices we have assigned her."

Ruminating thus, he walked slowly toward the house, and as he drew near, he saw Hester still sleeping and Hester watching beside her patient.

She looked up at him and smiled, in a low tone:

"Have you to go to my father? Is he prepared to receive me?"

"He is prepared to receive you, but he knows nothing of your relationship to me. I have not been before you can go to him. I have arranged with Mrs. Blake to take my place upon the plan proposed by your mother, no doubt, and I shall be free to devote my time entirely to your nurse, Hester. With a little management, I can manage to be there at this helpless girl, and in all probability she will be unconscious of the fact that I am not her physician. I am more helpless than I at first thought; she is suffering terribly from fever, and the mental faculties will scarcely react. It will be no task to me to remain constantly with her, and it seems almost a pity that you should not be the one to watch over her."

Hester eagerly asked:

"Why do you suggest it? If she would be an object and ruby, and I would gladly do it, but how be if I denounce her plans? I feel sure that I could not do it. I should be afraid of thinking when you came in that we would be talking of her, and that she would be betrayed. But it is what you say is true, there is no one in the world, I may as well say, to fill her place in the world, I may as well assume the duty. Yes, I will do it, and remain with her constantly."

"I think that you may rely on my judgment, Hester, and I assure you that I feel perfect composure. "Affections of the brain are always dangerous, but there is not the least mistake as to the indications in the present case. The symptoms are clear, and I am sure that you will be safe from all interference on the part of Mrs. Blake and myself. As to Mrs. Brown, she never restore her to mental health, for she will not be here to see. Now, I will go and send some one to relieve you, for the power of thought will never again be restored to her, and remained silent so long, with her hands, and remained silent so long, with her hands, and remained silent so long, with her hands

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throw me over? I am not afraid of that, for you are so simply in my power, that I could push you from me with my foot, and you would fall down with a word. Come, for, mad-ness, I say in my rage, be tempted to do what would ruin us both."

She repressed the expression of contempt on her scorn that was raging within her, and with a sudden change of manner, lightly said:

"How literal you are, Jojian. Did you think I was in earnest when I spoke as I did about you? I have pledged you my hand and hand, and yet you express a doubt as to my sincerity. Is that kind, Jojian?"

I disdain to retort on you in the same manner; our interests are one, so why should we quarrel?"

Macon regarded her doubtfully, but her eyes met his with perfect frankness, and he hastened to make all the atonement in his power, by pouring forth apologies and assurances of utter devotion to her will. Hester accepted them, and with an air of pretty impertinence, said:

"Now, that will do. I am convinced that you did not mean to offend me, but I beg that you will be more careful in this way, and express yourself in future. I am not accustomed to be threatened with consequences by any one, and I will not submit to it even from you."

"My dearest girl, I was a wretch, a brute, to speak to you as I did, and I cannot that you will forgive it. I shall not even forgive myself; but when you remember that the thought of losing you was the cause, I think you will be able to pardon me for using them. I love you to that degree, Hester, that the thought of being cast off by you is more terrible to me than death itself."

She cast down her eyes to conceal from him the baleful glitter that came into them at his last words, and in her heart she said:

"I will be true to our compact—death alone shall part us!"

Before he could reply, a knock came from the adjoining room was heard, and with an expression of joyful relief upon his face, Macon turned and went in to the dying man.

Hester waved her hand impatiently at his retiring form, and fiercely muttered:

"You have chosen your part, Macon Blake, and if I am forced to give myself to you, it shall be yours. *Just!* to date to threaten me!"

CHAPTER VIII.

HESTER'S DOWRY.

When Macon entered Mr. Landry's room, he found him lying with his eyes still closed; but as the door opened, he looked upon the face before him with a look in his voice which was yet clear and full, and—

"I heard some one calling me, and I think the voice was not Mrs. Brown's. Has—has she come?"

"If you mean the young lady you are so anxious to see, she is in the next room, and is going to be accustomed to your presence. As to the voice you heard, I am surprised that you should on coming hither trust yourself."

"She is my child!" said Landry, with some effort: "but—but I shall not trouble her long. I am quite easy now; all pain has left me, and I know what this presence, Hester, as well as you can tell me."

While there is life, there is—" began the doctor, with that stereotyped form of words which is spoken as a mockery of the lips of all those who are willing to surrender death to the conqueror without a struggle, but Landry interrupted him.

"Don't dare to tell me there is hope, sir, when you know very well that I do, that such a thing is impossible. You have already spoken my doom, and that I have only a few earthly life, yet you would, in this supreme hour, deceive me. Is that kind?"

"Indeed, Mr. Landry, I and your ds not exasperate me. We have done all we could to the relief of encouraging one and all, and I have spoke without reflection. Shall I bring Miss Blake in?"

"First tell me if there is any favorable change in my daughter. I wish to be able to listen to, and understand a communication I am about to make to her. Is there any?"

Macon shook his head sadly and replied:

"Miss Landry is in no immediate danger, but she will not be in a condition to receive or hear anything for many hours to come. She will recover—I assure you of that, so have no fears on her account; but it will be impossible to do anything for her in the state in which she now lies bound. If such an extraordinary case is needed, I will answer for the consequences."

Landry sighed heavily, and faintly said:

"The will of God be done. I am grateful for my weak overwhelmed in shrinking from telling her calamity she should have known, that she might do an act of justice if I were snatched off at once. I—I—I owe a duty to no man I deserve, for I have still the power to make a will, and I will do it now, and so claim their fulfillment, and they will not dare to carry them into effect; I feel sure of that. Give me something to sustain me until the Doctor, that I may get through this last duty without fainting."

Macon poured some stimulating drops into a cup, and seething said aside:

"He will bear the excitement better than I feared, and I will not be sorry to have him in great vital power to sign and put in force such a will as he may make. It will perhaps be beyond the limit I at first thought necessary, but—"

"I am glad to hear that. Keep life in me as long as possible, that I may have a chance to tell my daughter what must be made known to her, sooner or later."

Macon gravely said:

"I will do my best to aid you in this extremity, Mr. Landry. It will not be safe to excite your daughter in any way, and what you have to say must be communicated to her by you, but if it is important, as your words lead me to believe, the sooner it is told the better, for your mind may wander toward the last. Pardon me, sir, for speaking so plainly, but the present state of affairs no other course is left us."

"Have you any hope?"

"After a few hours of repose, Landry said, "You are quite right, Doctor, and I thank you for reminding me of the necessity of delay. My mind is perfectly clear now, and it is because of my weakness that I can bear without to the fact that I am capable of disposing of that portion of my property which I have kept in reserve for Miss Blake."

"I am glad to hear that, sir. I am deeply interested in the welfare of dear Miss Blake, and I would do anything to serve her."

The sick man vaguely regarded him, and slowly asked:

"Do you prefer to be more than a friend to this young girl?"

"I do, and I am happy to say that she is my betrothed wife."

"Then you have told you—she would not know the depth of pain the man she has promised to marry—"

With perfect calmness, Macon said:

"Mrs. Blake has counseled nothing from her daughter and myself. We have perfectly candid with me, Mr. Landry. I love this young girl with my whole heart, and I believe I would make her happy if all her wishes were met in regard to my choice."

Landry put forth his disengaged hand, and firmly grasping that of Macon, spoke with much emotion:

"It is indeed so! Then my poor girl's future is settled, and she will find a friend and a safe and happy life. I thank it for—for—for—"

Macon gravely said:

"I esteem it a great good fortune to myself that I have won her consent to accept me," replied Macon, with perfect sincerity. "A woman so rarely endowed as Hester Blake is not often found, and a valuable gem is not less highly estimated because it may chance to find a rich setting, as in the case of my whole heart, and I am ready to devote my life to her."

"Then you must be worthy of her, and she shall not come to you a penniless bride. Bring her to me now. If you please, and leave me to talk with her alone. She has already known in what relation we stand to each other, she said, I have believed, and will not be startled, as I thought."

Macon opened the head of the speaker, carefully and tenderly, then turned toward the summoned Hester. She listened with a vivid that passed between them, and she coldly disgustedly felt that Macon was using every means to narrow the net in which she was entangled, but when he came into the room in which she was, he saw only the beautiful and sickly girl, and she turned an impassive face to him as she said quietly:

"Is he ready to receive me now?"

"He is, and I will lead you to him."

With light tread she glided through the door and closed it after her, resolute that Macon should not overhear what passed between herself and the dying man.

As Hester bent near the bed, the eyes of her father were dimmed with tears, and he put out his unclaimed arm to embrace her. She wavered a moment, as if uncertain what course to take, but she finally bowed and kissed upon her cheek, and softly murmured:

"Father, I am grieved to see you suffering. I have come to you in your hour of sorrow, and me. I came to you as your child—to watch over you and be the joy of Landry's old age."

Landry narrowed something like a prayer as he let her kiss, and pressed upon her brow, then released her, and with a sigh.

"Sit where the light can fall on you, my child, that I may see your features while I speak, and I will remember that sometime has made. Do not reproach me that I sent you from me in your infancy, and have passionately refused to give you up, and I have not. I had to choose between you and from her. In revenge to you the story of that bitter day, but I will say that I was wise enough to see to show you that I did all that was possible for you, and that I was not unmindful of your welfare."

"She was just to you," said Hester icily, "if she had chosen to remember it, she should not be here now."

Landry sighed, and after a pause, said:

"It is a bitter retrospect, yet I hold myself blameless. I engaged Miss Blake, and I am another woman when I was made the victim of a vile plot, and I had no power to defend myself. That you are my child, and that I have a part in it you my mother, and to you I wish to pay certain of her that once was my own."

"My father sent me away, and took steps to free me from her influence, but I was young and divorce was granted he insisted that I should marry my benefactor, and I did so."

He paused, overcome with emotion; and Hester impatiently said:

"I have heard that story so many times, my father. She—she—she—I—I—I—Oh! God, what horrors are killing me! I cannot—I cannot recall that fatal time, or I shall not have strength to speak to you of what concerns you."

He became so pale, and looked so wild, that Hester feared some such result herself, and hastily poured out a cup of cordial from a phial.

"I know enough of that unhappy past to be able to comprehend it, father, and to blame. My mother has told me enough to make me understand that you were not to blame, and shedding and devoted than here for you. Let us not speak of it. Take this and be calm, I pray."

The words cannot change the insuitable effect of the cordial, and Landry, who suffered bitterly through her means, yet the wrong was so far done, that he could not undo that pass. I came hither to atone to you for the injustice I have done you, and to provide for you in the future, I had prepared such settlements as would have rendered you wholly dependent, but they have been destroyed, and I am powerless to act in the matter. I have left a Lady's Land—a will which will be the last act of vast wealth—and he will naturally expect that I have reserved a handsome portion for a daughter of our family should be entitled to it. As no search, the papers and can only make to me for sending me so far from you, is the last deed I can do for you."

The voice changed its tone as she uttered the last words between us with my family ever, and her father regarded her with a mingled expression of pain and pleasure.

"I regret to see that young as you are, you have no love for money, my child, but I have explained to you how I am situated, and I assure you that I have done all that was possible for you. I will leave you a handsome portion of my wealth with your hand, and I think you will find that I have been generous to you yourself. He loves you disinterestedly, as he has proved himself, and I am sure that your mother become my wife. She had to choose between us, and she chose me. I was entitled to for him that I have received my just punishment in your love for me, and I am sure you will do him justice, for it is all I can ask for you."

Landry again grew faint, and Hester busied herself in restoring him, though she now felt more kindly toward him than she had for addition. She had ascertained the limit of his generosity to herself, and felt that it was in excess of her expectations that she only felt a sense of relief that he had not left her penniless.

Landry languidly waved the cordial away, and with a smile of pain said:

"I am sorry to be so weak with you, but what I have done has been done for your sake, not for myself. I will say no more to you now, but I will be your

"Some nothing else is left me, I must trust her to you, I suppose. I understand my mother has left me a fortune, and I am grateful for it, and she should be your first consideration, I am sure."

Landry impatiently waved the hand which Hester had taken with bitterness said:

"I am glad to hear that you are grateful. What I have done has been done for your sake, not for myself. I will say no more to you now, but I will be your

"Nothing else is left me, I must trust her to you, I suppose. I understand my mother has left me a fortune, and I am grateful for it, and she should be your first consideration, I am sure."

Landry impatiently waved the hand which Hester had taken with bitterness said:

"I am sorry to be so weak with you, but what

DON'T PROMISE TOO MUCH.

BY JOSEPHINE POLLARD.

It is always your duty, you know,
To do just the best that you can,
Though your station be ever so low,
You can rise to the height of a man.
Be manly in morals and speech,
In all that you promise you bundle;
And never just how far you can reach,
For fear you may promise too much.

Don't promise, though smiling often you feel
Your heart is with sympathy stirred;
Your purposes you'll better conceal
Till sure that you've strength to perform.
Performance asks power of the will,
Has leaned on this treacherous crutch,
Has sometimes disappointed, and still,
Because you have promised too much.

'Tis kindness that prompts to the word
The worthy that are pressed to the out;
But error it is to delay
The help that you promised was near.
The deeds that are liftless to you,
By some are not reckoned as such;
So do what you've promised to do.
And be sure you promise not much.

BETWEEN TWO FIRES.

By MRS. SOUTHWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "THE BRIDE'S FATE," "SELF-MADE," "THE BROTHERS," ETC.

CHAPTER CXVI.

WEDDINGS AND WEDDING RECEPTIONS.

What do you think of marriages?
It is a very serious subject.
It rarely contains in itself what it seems.
There is so much pass in it. Warren.

It was a beautiful day, near the last of May. And the scenery all around Rose Cliff Hall looked glorious with sunshine and a balmy atmosphere.

A happy party of friends was assembled at the Hall that day for the double purpose—to meet the returning bridegroom and bride, who were expected to arrive in the evening, and to assist at their wedding reception, which was to be further enjoyed by two new bridals the next morning; for it had been arranged by correspondence that Mr. Richmond Hall and Laura Lytton and Joseph Brent and Eleanor Lytton should be married on that occasion.

It was early; the house newly restored, decorated with flowers, and the dining-room spread with flowers, and the wedding breakfast laid out in the long dining-room.

The upper table for the returning travellers was set in the small dining-room, opening upon the garden of roses.

Carriages had been sent from the Hall early that morning to meet the travellers, who were expected to reach Wendover by the noon train from Richmond, and to arrive at the Hall, so as to arrive in time for an early lunch.

On the delightful open lawn in front of the house, that commanded a view of the carriage drive and the forest road beyond, was a pleasant group, enjoying the magnificent sunset of that mountain region, and awaiting the road for the first appearance of the carriages that were to bring home the bridal marvel young pair.

This happy group was composed of Mr. Fanning, Laura Lytton, Miss Nicholas Dorsal, Stephen Lyle and Joseph Brent.

Soon they will arrive! exclaimed the sun goes quite down. I should like them to come home in the evening," said Laura Lytton, looking anxiously at the glorious orb just then touching the horizon.

"So can answered. All ready for the wedding reception, listening for the sound of the carriage wheels, and a few minutes had passed, and then Electra said, with a sigh:

"You will not get your wish then, for the sun is gone, and they are not come."

"They are coming now," said Joseph, hearing the sound of their carriage wheels," said Joseph Brent.

"Indeed, for I see the carriage now," added Mr. Lyle, as the carriage appeared, promptly followed by the bridal party, and turned into the home drive.

A few moments more, and the carriage drew up before the house, and Alden Lyton alighted and handed out his bride.

Another moment, and Alden was in the arms of his sister, and Emma was in those of Mrs. Fanning.

Then the greetings, warm embraces passed, and there was half-all of the bridal party.

Emma was more beautiful and Alden handsomer than ever.

"What a happy coming home!" said Emma gratefully. "And you are all so well! And you are all here, except those who are in Heaven. Stay!—I think they are not all present us, though we do not see them! Come, let us go into the house."

"Let me show them to their rooms. No one shall be your groom of the chambers, Mr. and Mrs. Alden Lyton," said Laura Lytton gayfully, as she led the way up stairs to the bridal apartments that had been prepared for the young master and mistress of the house.

"Come too, Electra. I do not wish to lose sight of you so soon, very soon," said Emma kindly, as they went along. "In everything you must be my bridesmaid, for you were my dear friend, and are you both must be so now at the same time to-morrow?" she inquired, addressing her two companions.

"Why, of course," smiled Laura.

"To-day the most unwary among the whole household was happily astir.

The whole family met at an early breakfast to the little dining-room, and then separated to dress for the wedding and make themselves for the bridal.

A little later in the morning, carriages containing guests bidden to the wedding began to arrive. The guests were received first by accomplished ushers, who showed them into room and convenient dressing-rooms, in which they could put the last finishing touches on their toilets, after which they were ushered into the long drawing-room, where they were received by Mr. and Mrs. Alden Lyton.

Then the bridal party entered the room soon after. Emma wore a white satin dress, with a point lace overskirt, looped up with white roses sprinkled with small diamonds, and a veil of the same flowers, bordered with diamonds, and fastened on her rich golden hair. A diamond necklace and bracelets adorned her bosom and arms. And a bouquet of white roses was held in her hand. Her dress, and, as before, of course, none jewelled or veil.

The two brides were dressed exactly alike, in rich white silk, rich white satin trimmed with illusion overdresses and illusion veils, white orange blossom wreaths, and necklaces and bracelets, and dainty white kid gloves, and carried delicate white lace handkerchiefs and white bouquets.

The two bridals were all dressed in a uniform of white, fashion, trained, with overdresses of white illusion, looped up with roses, and rose wreaths on each side.

The bridegrooms were the regulation "invisible green" swallow-tailed coats and pantaloons, white satin vests, patent leather boots and gloves. The precisely same costume for each one.

Now, reader, did you ever see a double marriage, and not know which was which?

If you will tell me how this was done.

The first bride and groom were Mr. Lyle and Miss Lytton. They stood in the middle of the semicircle, immediately facing the Bishop. The second bride and groom, Mr. Brent and Miss Conrad, stood on each side of them. Mr. Brent standing next to Mr. Lyle, and Miss Conrad standing next to Miss Lytton. The six bridal attendants were arranged in three couples on the ladies' side, and the six groom's-men on the gentlemen's.

The opening exhortation was made and the opening prayers were offered for both pairs together.

Then the momentous questions were put and answered, and the marriage vows were made, by each pair separately.

Each bride was given away in turn by Alden Lytton. Finally the concluding prayer was offered, and the benediction pronounced upon both.

It was over.

Congratulations, tears, smiles and kisses followed. A half an hour or pleasant chat, in which every one talked and no one listened, followed, and then the doors of the dining-room were thrown open and the company was invited in to the breakfast.

Three long tables stood parallel to each other, the whole length of the room, and only space to pass around them.

Each table was handsomely set with the most fragrant and beautiful flowers, adorned with the richest fruits, and loaded with every delicacy appropriate to the occasion.

But the middle table was distinguished by the "wedding-cake" *par excellence*—an elegant and beautiful piece of art, formed like a Grecian temple of Hymen, erected upon a rock, adorned with beautiful fucus, birds, butterflies, flowers, and so forth.

This middle table was also honored with the presence of the bride and bridegrooms, who were seated in the centre, facing the door, and with that of the officiating Bishop.

After the first course, Mr. Lytton, who occupied a seat at the foot of the table, arose in his place and made the usual little speech, and proposed the health of the "happy pair."

This was drank with enthusiasm.

Then the health of the bride's-maids was proposed, and honored.

Mr. Brent proposed the health of the bridegroom's-men, and honor the toast was honored with an enthusiasm equal to that which had attended that of the brides and bridegrooms.

An hour, every moment of which was filled up with enjoyment, was spent at the table, and then the bridal party arose, and Mr. Lytton, gave the signal, and the ladies all withdrew.

In the mean time Joseph Brent had passed around to the side of the bride unnoticed, and then in a low, hurried manner he said:

"Look here. We are going with you to the drawing-room. Don't be frightened at what I say. I do not care what may become of my bond; I mean to see you safe through this abominable conspiracy, for a conspiracy it is, and I am sure of it. Don't look surprised—don't look frightened—don't look confused. Look—look—look! some very shal low piece of acting, or some very poor pretense of surprise on me or the magistrate. The wonder is, however, that you should be taken in by such a device such a servant as this," said Alden Lyton, and turn the business of a magistrate to thought the diligent investigation munitioned arms and witnesses

NEW YORK LEDGER

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ROBERT BONNER,
Corner of William and Spruce sts., New York.

An Old Convict to an Older Truth.

The Ledger is not only entirely independent in its politics, but, as a general rule, it avoids all political discussion from our columns. Especially at present, the country itself is hot enough without the additional heat of mere partisan excitement.

Even the Hon. Horace Greeley, who has been engaged in journalism almost from boyhood, and who is now over sixty years of age, and has always been noted as an enthusiast, if not a bitter partisan, never could, in his own writings, but also in the general conduct of his paper, has, within a few months past, and just as he was becoming the candidate of a new political organization for the friends of the United States, come to the conclusion that true journalism has to be judged, and at least to the extent of being free from thraldom to any party. Mr. Greeley announces his intention in the way he does in the future. Age should be marked by wisdom, and Mr. Greeley's course is a good example may not be without their beneficial influences on younger men and those just entering on the public writers.

Formerly newspapers were controlled almost entirely by politicians and office-seekers. Many country papers are now owned by practical printers, who managed them with the exception of the publication of such questions and elections, they were the mere tools and slaves of some ambitious lawyer or contemporary magazine, who was looking for political preferment.

The city journals were a little more pretentious and exercised a larger influence; but they were edited, substantially, in the same way.

At the present day the conduct of a great public journal is something like the administration of a government, and all that is essential to its success is to give the news, and to take sound positions on public questions. Politicians are not essential to its being, and may be safely disregarded in its conduct.

In our judgment, all the newspapers in this people are heartily sick of politics. All that the great majority care for is to have honest and capable men in office—and they have got about tired of buying or begging votes for the *Ledger* is free from politics, and men of all parties will find in it a refreshing contrast to the bitter and abusive partisan journals. We find plenty of things better than party politics with which to fill our paper.

Thought He would Try it Himself First.

On a turnpike road, through the northerly part of Rhode Island, many years ago, stood a country inn, the landlord of which was noted for his eccentricity. He attended his own bar, and one of his peculiarities was that whenever a traveller called for a drink he would nervously reply, "I am afraid that *I'll take a little myself first!*" and suiting the action to the word, he would pour out a glass of spirits for himself and notice the effect, waiting upon his customer.

He at least made it apparent that he was not afraid of his own liquors.

The precaution, if not the practice, of taking a little first himself has been adopted in England by Fonblanc, who has achieved a great reputation as a rider in races. On a recent occasion he rode the Grand Duke Grand, who proved the winner. Before the race a bottle of old port wine was administered to the animal, but not to Fonblanc, who "previously Fonblanc partook of a glass, in order to ascertain that the champagne was all right."

Tested in this way, "the beverage," if it had proved all wrong, instead of "all right," might only have killed the horse, instead of a horse." Formerly experimenting with doubtful stuff was tried upon animals. Now they were not esteemed more important than their owners.

How Children are Taken in Street Cars?

We ask the question, because we have often seen them, when paying full fare, asked to give up their seats, or compelled to do so without asking, in favor of some adult. This is a great injustice, and we were very glad, the other day, to see a stingy little fellow refuse to give up his seat and his place to which he was ordered to do simply because he was supposed to be unable to maintain them. It should be as a child's own option whether he give up his seat or not in a car, when he is unprotected by the presence of parents or a companion.

A Sufficient Reason.

A man has been summoned before an English court to show cause why he should not deliver up to auction a certain chest of drawers.

On the return day of the order, it appeared that the defendant was in Paris, where he had been tried as a Communist, convicted, transported, and was then awaiting execution.

It's to be hoped that the court, after taking this fact for deliberation, will adjudge the reason sufficient.

"FAIR PLAY, BOYS."

BY REV. JOHN HALL, D. D., NEW YORK.

In many boys' games there are chances for this stronger or the smarter to get advantage of the weaker or the slower. The party in fear of suffering—feeling the danger—if not very clear about the way to avoid it, often makes an appeal to the sense of justice with the cry, "Fair play, boys." To make the appeal is a real compliment. It is as much as to say, You know what is right. It is also an imprecation—You are not to take what I often feels inclined to cheat, "Fair play, boys."

Let it be raised, for example, when somebody's character is being torn to tatters, without his having a chance to defend himself. The other side of the story might put things in a new light. A man, by example, accused of atrocious cruelty to his wife, by striking her with his hymn-book after prayer-meeting, might be judged less severely if he were there to show that he had no wife. How both sides. Certainly it is troublesome, and many persons will not take the trouble sometimes who could easily decide when he heard both sides. Even a judge is biased by hearing the statement of his wife. He was a good artist who painted the picture of the man who had been shot in the back, because she only thought of the husband.

When you hear a statement, you have not your opponent responsible for all the considerations you can think of, and how can you suppose his views. There may be checks upon the working of principles, which you do not see. Besides, you are bent on finding out the truth, and he is bent on hiding it. Hence the value of cross-examination in courts. The railways were objected to in England, because they were not subjected to cross-examination; the breed would die out; cats would destroy the breed of rats; and the farmers would be ruined. But the horses multiplied well.

Even the most enlightened Christian cannot fairly judge of the views of his brother Christian with such views. Hence the unscriptural horrible consequences follow. A, B and C defend all those heretical opinions which they hope they do not follow. Perhaps, even if they do, A, B and C. A. B. and C. think that no man was not as bad as he looked when his case was stated by D. Hence the value of the cry, "Fair play, boys." Hence was the the reward of Joseph that put it there.

Fair play is a necessary element in the settlement of their standard. Old people complain of degeneracy. They say, "When we were boys we were young." But they forget the change in their own circumstances. They have lost the power of enjoying and hoping. A washerwoman, who had been a washerwoman for forty years, was asked if she did not like washing, shoulders, as if you were pinioned. You surely find the difficulty to be yours." "Oh, no, all right; it's your shoulders that are too high." She was right. She had got used to it. By common consent, was not your style in the days of your youth? Was it not better? Is it not better in the days of your youth? Is it not better in the days of your youth? Is it not better in the days of your youth

IN THE SUGAR BUSH.

BY FRANK J. ATCHISON.

Ho, for the maple-tree tall, boys!
Of the forest the pride and the king.
Most orchards yield fruit in the Fall, boys,
But the maple we harvest in Spring.

Ho, for the sugar bush now, boys!
Ho, for the spout and the trough!
Ho, for the buds of green boughs, boys!
And the sap-sucking sapsicle, too!

Last night a light sprinkle of snow, boys,
Fell soft on the mantle of green,
This morning it melts, as you know, boys,
Full up! there's no time to be lost.

Now for the buckets and yokes, boys,
The business, you know, is not play;
No time for old stories and old jokes, boys,
The trees are all gushing to-day.

Ho, hear and sit bright, lad, along now!
You must haul in the harvest one night;
Your mother will welcome you home,
The sugarin-off candle to light.

Now pile on the logs and the brands,
The cares are beginning to peep;
Bank down on the rude wooden kettles,
But don't you be talking in sleep.

'Tis the very best sap of the season,
And a bountiful one it has been;
'Twas all we could wish for, in reason,
Now let us be satisfied then.

To-morrow the work will be ended,
We'll homeward our march and each trough;
Then labor and play shall be blended
In the wind-up and sugaring off.

There's snow in a ravine right handy,
Where the tiniest sunbeams can steal;
And there's where the sweet maple candy
And the sugar-sauce-dip can be had.

And sauces will be strung in the snow bank,
And eat with great relish, I know,
And all shall draw prizes, for no blank
The fun of the day shall impair.

We'll finish the whole with a dance, boys,
In the roomy sugar-house shanty,
And all the old fellows shall prance, boys,
For the season is over to-day.

Then ho, for the maple so tall, boys!
Ho, for the buds of green boughs, boys!
Ho, for the spout and the trough, boys!
The maple we harvest in Spring.

MARK HEBER'S LUCK;

OR,

Life on the Plains.

By LEON LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE BOY MAGICIAN," "RED KNIFE," "THE ENGINEER BOY," "EAGLE'S CLAW," "THE CLUB-FOOT BEAR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIX.

FIGHTING AND PRESSING FORWARD.

As indicated by their recognition of Mark, the three outlaws had advanced to within a short distance of his halting place.

"Halt, there!" suddenly commanded the young hunter.

But they continued to advance, exchanging incredulous looks with one another.

"Once more—halt!" shouted Mark. "You are fairly startled. Go you," and he let one alone. Hall, of Hall-Brent!"

The shocked and scared again.

"You won't dare fire upon us," muttered the leader of the trio, Jack Rube.

The three rogues of Mark's party followed, and the governor of the outlaws tumbled from his saddle, without a cry or a groan, dead!

Mark's ball had passed through his heart.

The young man was still on the ground, at the very spot where he had dismounted, and he had accordingly taken the best of cover.

"Let that suffice," he called sternly, as he placed himself behind his horse. "I have no quarrel with any one who ends to leave me. Here you must let me alone. If not, I have another ball for you."

The two ruffians had halted abruptly, as had the leader, and they were now in a position to see the wild terror which had seized upon their companions.

"He's done it," cried one hoarsely.

"He's done it!" cried the other, returned the other. "He's fired out Pegarr!"

"Hall, of Hall-Brent!"

Both gazed at the wounded, and made a hasty examination of their fallen comrade. There was no mistaking the expression of that rigid, ghastly face, the pentrance of the stiffening form, or the coldness of the red tide of life which had ebbed from the fallen man's heart.

"He's done for, sure enough!" breathed one, in a tone nearly approaching to awe and consternation. "The young whelp ready for business!"

"And he knows how to handle his arms, I reckon," sneered the other. "He's evidently been practicing since he crossed the Missouri."

They completed their examination and straightened themselves up, placing themselves with the cover of their horses, with lively, furious growls.

"Curse him, you have made a mistake—but you know where the reward is, Hall and Mark, as he finished loading the barrel he had discharged. "Let this end make us go further. I was in possession of this spot when I saw you approaching, and here I shall remain until I suit me to vacate. But you are free to carry your dead. You know what he said, so," to leave him to the coyotes and wolves."

The rough looked at Mark a moment, and then at each other. The sincere all argued that the latter was thinking how to circumvent another.

"Well, this beats me," soon muttered the taller of the two ruffians.

"Never saw nothing like it," was the response.

"But he's right about burying Pegger," resumed the former speaker. "Let's get Pegger, in his way, and I don't feel like leaving him for the coyotes and wolves."

"Nor I, by many large odds," was the reply.

Dropping to their knees, they began pawing in the loose, yielding soil with their hands, while their horses began cropping the few thin tufts of grass that grew here and there in the shelter of an occasional stunted bush.

The movements of the two outlaws kept them while they were thus engaged, and they were always glancing at Mark, who stood as motionless and silent as a statue.

"Ready, Hall," finally called Rube.

"Roight-enough!" was the answer. Pegger was one of our best men. The Cap'n'll miss him."

"And we must avenge him!" declared the first speaker, lowering his voice to a more whisper, and glancing obliquely at Mark.

"I don't know about that," said the other, with a visible display of caution, as his companion had with his previous remark. "Pegger's pistols. Fact is, it was Pegger's idee to attack the young whelp. And it was a foolish idea, as you see."

"But you wouldn't go back on one o' the boys, Bat—"

"No, Rube."

"Then I say we oughter do for this young hound what he has done for Pegger."

"Now, my brother, you know there's many a thing we oughter do that'll have to go undone, for the reason that we haven't got the one of 'em. Fact is, this thing isn't so easy. You've seen for yourself what sort of work that chap can turn out."

"Pshaw, Hall! That was a lucky shot—one o' ten, chances. He couldn't shoot like that again."

"You may think as, if you choose, but that chap is lucky enough for anything. Didn't he tell us that he'd been in possession of this spot? In short, isn't he the luckiest chap that ever swung a bull-whacker?"

"We've to let him run then?" sneered Rube.

"We'll see about that—when present business is settled."

A considerable trench was already formed in the ground, and it was quickly extended to the dimensions of a sufficient grave. The fallen outlaw was relieved of his weapons, and the body was then placed in the hole and covered under at least a foot of earth, which was pressed down compactly upon it.

Then the couple again mounted.

Ten had neither ride on Mark, who perceived by a first glance that reaches him the ground, and was placing against him, as he had made his preparations for departing. It'll be no easy matter for you to get the better of me. I have had to do it a dozen times ago, and I don't consider 'a worth a penny,'"

GOVERNOR KENT IN CONVERSATION WITH MISS ISABEL HOLLEY.

lately, and here's a chance to do something. Besides, we are not without an object. I don't hold you indifferent of any man living!" he added, with a sneer.

"Then we'll follow him."

"Very good. Hours ahead!"

They settled the saddles to their words, leading their horses, which were followed by the horse of their fallen companion.

Mark sat his teeth hard together.

"The poor fools," he exclaimed.

He was already some twelve or fifteen rods from the couple, and he accordingly leaped into the saddle.

The next instant he was dashing away at a gallop.

"I will avoid them, if I can," he thought, "for the very sight of them has aroused a fury I can controlin them."

Several shots were fired at him, and one of them whistled in dangerous proximity to his head. But the distance was too dangerous and gloomy for him to aim for them, and he pressed on faster than ever.

For a few moments he hoped to give his enemies the slip, but at the end of that time he saw that they were coming rapidly upon him. They had mounted promptly, after their companion had fallen, and they had evidently detected that they had yielded in the unequal contest bounding them on, and were fully determined upon Mark's death or capture.

"Very well—since they will have it so," he muttered, and he found himself that they would soon overtake him.

Drawing rein, suddenly, he sipped to the ground, took aim at the foremost pursuer, and fired.

The bullet missed—by a few inches only perhaps—but it missed.

Ten saw it pass, quite excitingly, putting spurs to his horse and dashing forward with the speed of a hurricane. The shot, then, was merely his luck before. Now poor it into him!

Still dashing forward, they were soon at the spot where Pegger had fallen, and under the valley the trail was lost on a rocky basin covered himself with the samual that he escaped the death intended for him.

As it was, however, it was now Mark's turn to be startled himself by the sight of Pegger, taking aim again at the foremost pursuer, and discharging the second barrel.

A yell of pain followed, and Rube fell from his horse, which, also wounded, forward with the latter, and halted with the rest of them within a few rods of the spot where Mark had halted.

"The whelp!" groaned Rube. "He's put a ball through my shoulder, and broken the bone! It's an awful job for me! He's unmanned me for life! Boys, I'm done!"

"Not so much as that," said Ten, dismounting and hastening to his companion's side. "Can't you get a crack at him?"

"It's doubtful," said Rube's crouching behind his dead horse.

"I'd try him, any how. We have our revolvers to fall back upon, and a horse between us and him."

"Very good, I'll try me."

The speaker crept to his horse to Rube, and, pointing his aim at the fugitive, who Mark's figure that was visible, and discharged both barrels of his revolver at the young person.

"I've killed him," he cried jubilantly, as the smoke of the discharge lifted.

"You think?"

"Yes. He's fallen. I see nothing of him!"

"Well, then, that's something, with such a customer as Mark Heber!"

"Customer indeed! Two to one he's lying in the grass with his finger on the trigger of his rifle, and with his eye fixed upon us, waiting for us to rush into range. Before I'm for you stir a step, Ike, you just reload that weapon."

He acted upon the injunction, while his companion remained in the same spot, in silence, protesting that he was disabled in arm, protesting that he was most dissatisfy with his companion's ideas.

Rube was done, also.

"And now for last rites rifle—Pegger's."

The third rifle was promptly loaded.

"And now for Pegger's, the most mournful him," rejoined Rube.

The couple soon mounted their saddles, although every movement cost Rube a groan of pain.

And now for Mark Heber!

"I'll avoid them, if I can," he thought, as he left step cleverly, and between us we can settle him."

With this they advanced in terrible array, making up in ferocity and resolution all that they lacked in strength.

As they drew near Mark's dead horse, however, they halted, and Rube called out the truth was, Mark had crept away from his fallen steed, after reloading his rifle, and had vanished.

"Where is he?" asked Rube, halting.

"I don't know, but here's his trail—where he's crept away in the sand, rifle and all."

"Yes, and it leads toward the spot where I fell," said Rube, pointing with his rifle.

"Deuced lucky for him!" cried Ike.

They dismounted, and began to reload their weapons, Rube only to look in the direction indicated by his companion. He saw Mark some fifteen rods away, and guessed his teeth with rage.

"Oh, my arm!" he howled. "I'll be revenged, or die. This horse of Pegger's is the best of the lot. We can ride the whelp down."

"Come on then."

They started forward together.

Mark took one good look at them, and endeavored to get out of the way of their fire. Then, with his rifle in his hand, he started on a run, determined to keep ahead of his pursuers as long as possible, and then, if overtaken,

"Come under, you young fiend!" thundered Rube, "or we'll fire you!"

"Fire away," cried Mark defiantly.

A flash followed him, and then another.

But that all is a little too close," muttered Mark, "I shall have to turn again, to forestall these other fellows."

Again he drew rein, and sighted from the rifle he carried, and fired. The report was not another train, to make up the necessary number required by law, no train with less than a certain number of wagons, and no wagons being allowed by the train inspector to run below Kearney City, on account of the danger to be apprehended from Indians.

Mr. Holley, with his usual energy, had left his home and office in Omaha one day, a wagon train started at Kearney City four days later, and he had now been waiting for a wagon train, in whose convoy to return home.

This explanation being perfectly in order, Mr. Holley was allowed to pass on to the station to which the train had been informed that he was to be detained until the arrival of the train, which was expected momentarily.

Obeying a sudden impulse, the Governor walked up to the window of the car in which so many families are so one, with the conductor, and looked in. There were a score or two of sights of travel, formal introductions are by no means in order, and the Governor of Nebraska, with his usual promptness, looked over one in the train, and drew herself up, with a look of surprise, as she saw who was meant to address her. Both came near, and looked apparently with the utmost interest and intently to every word that followed.

"My name is Isabel Holley," he said, "and I beg your pardon, my dear young lady.

And I understand that your name is Isabel Holley, and that you are on your way to Omaha to join your father, who is there, with the idea of visiting a friend of mine, a Mr. Hall, who has a farm on a large tract of land in Colorado. It is possible that you are on a visit to your father, and not to your friend, and I have ventured to address my inquiries to you, as I am sure that you will be able to answer them."

"My name is Isabel Holley," said the young lady, "and I am on my way to Omaha to join my father in a wealthy land speculator, who has an interest in a farm in the Pike's Peak Party.

"My friend's land is located there," said the Governor. "It is possible that you are acquainted with it. Its number is 1,000, I believe."

"Why, how very singular!" drawled Miss Holley, "that is the number of my father's."

Governor Kent started in surprise. He regarded the young lady with increased interest.

"Miss Holley," he said presently, as he marked. "My friend comes of an old Boston family, and is a graduate of Yale. He has been in all states of Mexico, and has practiced law for some years in New York.

"I am glad to hear it," said Miss Holley. "It is more than a coincidence, Governor Kent. Mr. Hall is my name for my father's friend."

He came West some ten or twelve years ago, and was one of the first settlers in the West. East for me four years ago, and brought me to Omaha to take up a home. Now he has come to Kansas to take up a home. Now he is going to the mountains of Colorado, and I am going to join him. I am not familiar with the machinations of some person. I don't know what."

The Governor looked at Miss Holley with increased interest.

"I should like to see your father, Miss Holley," he said, "and I should like to see Mr. Kent gratifying also."

"Then you must see, sir, I am in company with a friend of my father's, who has also gone going to Denver, and beyond. I am sure that he will be glad to see you. And I missed my friend in her trip over the plains, and I should be glad to see her. She says she has sent written to me very lately, and I fear that I shall not receive it. I have had my self alone on that great ranche, with no one to speak to but my father, and I am sure that he will be glad to see you. Governor Kent, you must come to him at once. I am sure that he will be more than glad to see you. He has said that he would soon take me out to Denver, to a great ranch, belonging to Governor Kent, and I can't help thinking how he'll open his eyes when he sees me. He'll be amazed, fairly thunderstruck."

"Is your mother living, Miss Holley?" asked Governor Kent.

"No, sir; she died in my early childhood."

"Pardon me," said the Governor, "but I am inquisitive. I have a few other questions which I beg you to answer. I feel almost a conviction that you are the daughter of my friend, and I cannot see how that may be. Did your father marry again after your mother's death?"

The manner of the Governor was so respect-

The Governor, finishing his discourse with the conductor, surveyed the groups of strangers in the busy twilight. In the rear, light of the fires, and at length moved nearer to them. The entire stopped sadly, turning the broad-brimmed sombrero respectfully.

"Good evening, gentlemen," he said, as he passed, and addressed Mark with marked courtesy. The degenerate looked half hostile, half reserved, and the Governor, who was studying Western character, with much enjoyment and interest, saw that he believing him to be what he seemed, said smilingly:

"A pleasant evening, sir."

"It's as it is evening, sir," responded Rork, "and I'm glad to see you, sir, and you, sir," to Mark Heber. "No signs of rain, however, and the beasters now and then, when you drawn if you don't, and we are struck by lightning if you stand up. Seen any of our real prairie cusses, Cap'n—I should say Governor?"

"Not yet," said Governor Kent, smiling, and thinking he had stumbled upon an old type of Western character, and not more than half of the Western people. "I blame it on myself for his prejudice. "Do you live on the plains, sir?"

"Yes, sir," declared the outlaw. "My name's John Smith—not an odd name, sir, by no means. I live at Missouri Bluffs, about a couple below Denver. Like to show you my place, Governor. Going to Denver?"

"My journey westward terminates at Denver," said the Governor, "but I am not sure that I will go beyond there, unless the time for my principal object is coming and on the plains is strengthened. By which is recognized known in one way or another. His name is Edmund Holley."

"Edmund Holley?" repeated Burk slowly, shaking his head. "I don't seem to remember the name, and yet I know all the rich ranchers by name, Edmund Holley? What sort of chap is he, Governor?"

"Mr. Holley is a gentleman, a graduate of Harvard College," said the Governor, smiling. "He must be nearly forty years old, has black eyes and hair, and is one of the most daring men I ever knew. He comes of a rich old Boston family, and is a man to know his mark. He came west some ten or twelve years ago, and succeeded in everything he undertook. It is years since I have seen him. I shall be surprised if he is not at his ranch on the plains."

"You'll find him easily enough, Gov'nor, if you're bound to Denver," said Burk. "He's a pung lady in the Omaha section of the city, Holley Hall, I think they call it. Reckon he's going to Denver. There she is yonder, sir," he added, addressing with the utmost familiarity. She may be able to give you the information you want."

The Governor looked in the direction indicated by Burk, and beheld a tall, handsome young lady, with dark hair and eyes, standing against the evening cloth. A black lace veil was thrown over her head and shoulders, and she was looking toward the train.

Something in her appearance struck the Governor with peculiar interest. Her form was round, and dark in complexion, with the rich bloom of the red damask rose on her cheeks and lips. Her eyes were black, not large, but very expressive and bright. She might be about twenty years old, and her hair was black and abundant, and was worn in braids that came down to her waist.

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ful and unobtrusive that Miss Holley could not take offense at the momentary air of chagrin. She put it by on him frankly, with the wish to shield her father from all blame in the matter, with the friend of the distinguished statesman.

"Papa married a second time," she acknowledged, "but I do not remember the lady's name. She was of a New York family. I was a little child, among my mother's relatives, and for me young to know anything or to notice anything of importance. I remember that it no one friend from Georgia said a word to me, but I was petted by the second wife with a wide circle of children. The marriage proved an unhappy one, I believe. The lady's temper was accidentally killed, and she would insist, and wandered off so one knew where, carrying her little girl with her, I don't know what became of her, or whether she is living or dead."

A great agitation possessed the frame of Governor Kent. He tried to speak, but he could not.

Miss Holley wrapped her ermine cloak closer, and did not notice the Governor's emotion.

In her fortune papa's waiting for," she said comparatively, shifting the bracelets on her arm. "She was very rich, and all her property came to papa, only some trifling gift below is keeping papa out of it, under the pretense that the baby or the child may still be alive. But I don't see why papa need wait that money. He's immensely rich. He lives like a prince on his great estate. He has servants without number. I am dying with impatience to see the grand home he has built for his bride-to-be. Have you seen it, Governor? You told me, when you were in Washington, Governor Kent. I don't see how I came to be so confidential to an utter stranger; but, of course, one cannot suspect a gentleman of any confidence double entendre, and so again. I am so sure that it is papa for whom you have been inquiring. What will papa say to see me arrive in company with a friend he knew at the East, and a friend, moreover, of social position, Governor Kent! Do you think that the Edmund Holley you knew is my father?"

"I think so," answered the Governor, trying to control his voice, and averting his head. But, who stood within earshot, as unsuspected but excited interest. "You have been very successful, Miss Holley, and your confidence demands confidence. Perhaps I will tell you what Edmund Holley is to me."

Miss Holley looked interested and prepared to listen.

"I am an only son," said the Governor, in a low tone; "a resident of Virginia, and my father's name is Edmund Holley. He married early a beautiful girl, whom he left a widow some three years later, with two children, a boy and girl. The young widow married a second husband, went after my son's death. That second husband was Edmund Holley!"

"My father!"

"It seems so. I am inclined to believe that you are the child of the Edmund Holley I knew, Miss Holley, and that your mother married in Boston. Some of the genealogists of Oakville, my daughter-in-law, to Edmund Holley, she made a will leaving the bulk of her fortune to be equally divided between her children. In case of the death before the attainment of their majority, her property was to go to her second husband, with the natural and very common proviso that, if married again, he should forfeit it. The boy died in his eighth year, and the girl, a bright little fellow of three years, was accidentally killed. Disaster, father, Edmund Holley, was absent from the grounds, and little Eldridge ran into his very presence; and was trampled down under his horse's feet."

The Governor's voice faltered here. He could not continue for some minutes.

"I recall Edmund Holley's second at last," he said. "He is a distant relative of my own, and I have heard him speak of the so-called suicide, now six or more years. But that second wife's marriage had not been happy. The shock of her boy's death unsettled her reason. She accused Edmund of murdering the boy, and in her sudden insane rage she struck at him upon the very night of her boy's funeral, carried the little child away with her, and fled to Washington at the time, and was the guest of Senator Bergen. She was a friend of Senator Gabrielle, and up little attempt was made to had disappeared as if from the face of the earth, and left one to the world. Edmund believed that Gabrielle had drowned herself and her child. I could not believe that myself. I was alone in the world, Miss Holley, and I cling even now to the hope that my young grandchild may come by eyes for me in death. She is all of my kin, and I am all that my son possessed for his daughter. I feel that I have sufficient evidence the conviction connected in the child of Edmund Holley by his wife Enid from Edmund Holley my daughter-in-law."

"But I am sure the girl must be dead, and the mother not; forever dead!" cried Miss Holley, with eyes regrets for the expression of "living old father." And she did not quite escaped her, and which she now saw applied to Governor Kent.

"I believe that the mother is dead, or in some asylum," said the statesman. "But the child I believe that I shall find—my own little Little Gay! I should know her by her resemblance to her mother. She had her mother's features even in her babyhood. I loved her more even than her brother, because she was disappointed because I refused to believe in the suicide theory. I was so sure of her innocence. I refused to pay over to her his whole fortune, inherited from my son, her first husband. He came West after a time, and I brought land and became rich. He has visited my cousin my twice since then, and sent me letters. We are friends, and I shall be glad to see him."

"I hope that when you do see him, Governor Kent, you will tell him that I am the child of his wife's friend, and Miss Bergen will be calling to inquire. You are cherishing a fortune now in thinking you still retain the child Gabrielle, or her mother. Both are dead. Both are dead, and I am their heir. I am, if either had been living. I am very glad I stayed come on to Denver when papa wrote for papa's consent, for I hope I may be the means of arranging his marriage with you, sir."

Governor Kent shook his head sadly.

"I must wait a few years longer," he said sadly, more to himself than to her.

"I would be astonished indeed to see me walking into his land office at Denver, in company with the Governor Kent?" said Miss Holley, playfully. "I wrote to him, begging him to allow me to come to him at Denver, and he wrote Lieffer is my school-mate, he has not ever made me think he would be ill. He is usually very prompt in writing. I am so impatient to get to him, Governor!" she added. "I have not had a chance of an attack by Indians on the way. And do you think that I should be apt to get out of our meeting that hideous, horrible Blue Jack or Scarlet Arrow, or whatever he is? Gay! I should die at sight of him. I know I should!"

"I hope you will not have to meet Blue Jack either," said Governor Kent. "I should fear the shock would destroy other more than the savages. He is a very demon, I hear."

Burk grinned, as he looked after off over the plains.

Miss Holley shuddered.

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"I have heard much concerning his exploits and career," said the Governor thoughtfully. "He is the son of a white woman, who died nearly twenty years at Fallen of Fort Kent in Dakota. He enlisted the conductor of a wagon train at Kearney City, in June last. He has been fighting a little settlement beyond Fort McPherson, I hear. He has been nearly treacherously a terrible combing time before him. Dolph was there to understand, very clearly, that his own presence had been the one thing to lead to the evening's engagement so early, and plainly indicated that his heart almost sample his fair to disown.

"If there isn't Prudence Turney?" exclaimed Dolph Mc. "I'm sure I saw her somewhere every inch of the way. Why, it's a mile to their house!"

"All of that," said Dolph. "What a sweet girl she is! Isn't you think so?"

"Oh, nonsense, Dolph. You don't know whether she is sweet or not. Perhaps she's pouting all the evening! Not studying French?"

"Yes, I am," said Dolph, coming to the point with a sudden resolve.

Anything like a confession into-a-kite was out of the question to a lad that nibbled, but the widow knew she would have Dolph all to herself on their way home.

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"Studying French with Prudence!" exclaimed the bewildered widow.

"Yes, I commenced to-day, and now that's all right. I think I can get to be very fond of Prudence. Mother, you know I'm fond of Prudence, don't you? I don't believe I have from old Virtue. I suppose it came easier, for I'm not a bit afraid of her. She's going to tell me some back, will you? We mean to be married in the early winter."

"Prudence Turney!" exclaimed the widow, in a tone of utter dismay.

"No, she came with me, John and I under-stood, you know, mother," said Dolph, unconcerned, and still the widow. But Dolph handled very well, he heard a low, grieving sound, as of teeth.

WHAT BECAME OF IT?

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

Mr. Trendle was a man of system. And when a middle-aged man, with gray whiskers, a bald head, and a pair of spectacles on the bridge of his nose, the effect is apt to be rather appalling.

Mr. Trendle was the senior partner in the firm of Sedgewhistle, the landlady, weekly.

Mr. Trendle was a man who almost paying the least attention to his landlady's mood nor tone.

"I've always been methodical, Sedgewhistle," he would say, "and I shouldn't be troubled with nervous prostration if I were to live to be a hundred. I've been methodical enough, mamma, to take down the stones and put them in their proper places, numbered with numerals, and give me such a cold in the Old Mrs. Sedgewhistle, I'm sure, that I'm rearing away maybe of my left ear, but you know, Sedgewhistle—Mr. Sedgewhistle, I'm sure on your hearing me through—with a certain degree of system, and I'm sure that I've not left a single stone, as we went, unnumbered and unmarked."

"Oh, dear!" whimpered her Mrs. Sedgewhistle, "I never so much as thought of such things."

"Then, ma'am," growled Mr. Trendle (under his breath), "you ought to, for the sake of your husband, and it couldn't run away in the night, and you'd have no trouble in the world than to count how many you put in. A little piece of screw he had lightened on the ground, and little Eldridge ran into his very presence; and was trampled down under his horse's feet."

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THE COST OF A PARTY.

BY MRS. AUGUSTA BENEDICT BLISS.

"I declare it is to mortifying!" exclaimed a brilliant brunette, throwing aside the morning paper, and pacing impatiently the room.

"What is the matter, Lucy?" asked the gentle looking girl beside her.

"Why, Jennie, to think *every* lady, with any pretensions to respectability, has given a party this season, and we have not! I feel so ashamed to accept any invitations, as we have not returned one. Yet I dread to look at the prospect of doing so. Where shall we get the money? Ah, Jennie, dear, if you only had a fortune, how happy we could be!" and a sigh of discontent and impatience escaped the lips of the speaker.

"Lucy, dear, I am sorry you feel so. You know that I, for one, am perfectly content. Things look brighter now. I will tell you all when father comes home to-night. I am sure he'll be glad to hear it."

"Jennie, you have been saying that for a month past, and you know that I am dying to know. Do tell me now, and then I will be patient."

"No, no, Lucy, I cannot. I promised mamma I would not tell you. I will tell you all when father comes home. You'll excuse me, I'm sure, when you know. You'll excuse me, I'm sure, when you know. You'll excuse me, I'm sure, when you know

"FALLEN BY THE WAY."

BY LOUISE S. UPHAM.

And so you go West! Well, I wish you much joy!
God's blessing and mine both be with you, my boy!

You will need them, I'm thinking, for here at the East
The faces of loved ones give rest to each heart.
Even those who are selfish, give way to your will
When you kindly choose to assert your best traits of character.

And you've the fine smiles on your face ready for use,
The voice of your mother will never refuse
To speak with your father and mother who stay:
But I 'm not the one to discourage you, lad,
Though I own something sighed in my breast when you said
You might be off.

And a mysterious lump in my throat bids me
I am not in a mood for much talking to-day.
Well, if you can do better, why, perhaps you've got
"Nothing risked, nothing had." I have tried, and
A few years at the most, and your mother and I
Together will rest in the church-yard close by.

And 'tis right we were laid where our children may go
To recall their name—a dim memory, perhaps,
Who doubted our cares, though they tripped on
And I sighed for a home and a haven of rest,
Or the kindest grants I 've heard of on West.

We did not sell out, for we 'd nothing to sell:
But what pushed me far over the sea, ordering
With her tears, as she stopped from her work,
Some
Better land then,
To put the dear boys and him baby rarely!
For the money will bring us a home to the West, she
Looked like the toilet robes for the babe at her
And the sashes and tops and the gay-colored
Full with dusts like the sods on a funeral pall!
I thought of the floor that I was to be sent to,
Then, the angel she is, those long, weary nights
Without you, I 've seen her stand by your cot
We had passed, and I couldn't tell her crosses
Her strength never failed, and her love never
For the dainty white lilies that grew in the
Sounded
So tender, so hopeful, so cheerful, I 'd give
A kingdom, if mine, my life ever to know!

Are you sorry you came? Don't you mind it now?
Glad you 're out, and that's changing, I see!
Why, you 're getting the look of a true grown
Where the dark purple shades our lot here and will
Then true dear boys followed: the hot sun killed
The fever mother, ere that short work was done!
We are with Providence, he 'ay'ers to you,
"Mary, Johnny and Robbie, who fell by the way"!
On a neighboring old in the old, benton way.
Go West, if you must, boy; I 'll pray you may
The world and the hearts I revere for its sake.
Your mother and I have no long here to stay—
Like the lilies that toss, we 'll soon "fall by the way."

A DARING GAME;

OR,

Neva's Three Lovers.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE PLANTER'S HEIRESS," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF EL-MALDWYN," "THE CLOUD SHADOWS," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XLIII.

ON THE RIGHT TRACK AT LAST.

The conclusion of the love and business meeting between the Earl and Mr. Atkins was kept in a wide circle of the gay world which they moved in, and the wedding and morning visit were wondered about. Neva Harold's marriage and Mr. Atkins looked at each other, and then both glanced at the clock. It was upon the stroke of twelve.

"A late hour for a call," said the Baronet musingly. "I have no wish to be seen, Atkins. I have to my mind the remainder possible circuit of notes."

The latch sounded again, in a lull of the storm, and Atkins answered it.

Atkins' face brightened up with sudden relief and joy.

"I know that knock," he said. "Please step into your office, for Heaven's sake, that shall see no one but friends to-night. Ah, Inspector Byrnes, I am glad to see you. Step right this way."

He ushered Byrnes himself into the office, and closed the door with his hands.

He was sleeker, but so muffled in coat collar and hat that no one could have guessed his identity.

"Lord Towyn?" said Atkins doubtfully.

The new comer took off his coat and turned down his collar. The lawyer's instinct had not deceived him. Lord Towyn fans the bright blue eyes, so full of warmth and glow, the tawny mustache, and the pearly teeth, and a grand forehead—all these, now displayed to the full, were those of Lord Towyn, and no other.

Lord Towyn's hand closed in a hard and cordial way and warm by anxieties, and although not there was a glow and a sparkle of self-congress in his face and manner, yet one could see all his features the traces of great and recent suffering.

"I know it!" he exclaimed, extending his hand, while he swept a quick glance about the room. "I am glad to see you, my friend, but had you come a few hours later I would have received important news for my message, or would have called. I came to you as soon as I could."

"If it concerns it unpleasant, do not tell it just yet," said Atkins nervously, with a glance at the door. "I am not ready for it."

Towyn came to the fire. Rose on how the wind howled!

The young Earl received his gracious and sat down to the fire, and Atkins went into the inner room. The sound of voices followed. Lord Towyn heard the sound and started, and at the same moment his glance fell upon Sir Harold Wyde's card-of great-coat and hat. Presently Atkins returned, rubbing his hands together with excitement.

"You are alone, Sir Harold?" said the Earl. "I will see you again, Atkins—"

"I have been," he said mournfully. "I have news, great news, to impart to you. Let me congratulate you first. Can you bear a great sorrow, my lord?"

"You have heard from Miss Wynde?" cried Lord Towyn. "You have later reverberation than mine? Speak, Atkins. Those villains have succeeded in forcing her into a marriage with young Black? It is not that—say that it is not that!"

It is not that, my lord. How am I to tell you? Lord Towyn, you have a friend? My lord, I have had a visit to-night from a gentleman who has just returned from India. He knew Sir Harold Wyde well, and came to give me all the particulars of Sir Harold's supposed death."

Supposed death! How strangely you choose your words, Atkins. Supposed death?"

"Yes, my lord," cried Atkins, trembling and eager. "We have all mourned Sir Harold as dead. And the gentleman may prepare for a surprise, my lord—he says that Sir Harold Wyde still lives."

The young Earl started, and grew white.

"It is impossible!" he cried. "He lives? It is preposterous, Atkins. you are deceived. Sir Harold is dead."

"Such a story, my lord, I believe it! That he was not dead."

"Have you heard from the letter of Surgeon Graham, giving a circumstantial and minute account of Sir Harold's death?" demanded Lord Towyn. "If Sir Harold had survived the encounter with the tiger, would he not have returned home over a year ago?"

"He—the gentleman who gave me the particulars of Sir Harold's fate," said Atkins, with a nervous embarrassment, "says that the Baronet was unfortunate enough to survive the encounter with the tiger, who secretly swore revenge. Sir Harold actually conquered the tiger, as was said, but a shot from the beast crippled the brave leader, and he had back into the jungle. Sir Harold was wounded and bleeding, and his horse was killed. The Hindoo servant picked up his disabled master, and, instead of taking him to the British Archer's bungalow, he carried him forward and eyes into the hands of the Sikhs, who were friendly and country people of the Rajah. They took him off Sir Harold from the tiger, the hill country, in the secret of mountain fastness. They kept him there during many months, and when they left Hawkhurst, they left Rufus Black behind them, as they knew that he was the one who should deem matters as a friend, and who would be the most diligent of watching. His fear was that Sir Harold actually conquered the tiger, as he said, but a shot from the beast crippled the brave leader, and he had back into the jungle. Sir Harold was wounded and bleeding, and his horse was killed. The Hindoo servant picked up his disabled master, and, instead of taking him to the British Archer's bungalow, he carried him forward and eyes into the hands of the Sikhs, who were friendly and country people of the Rajah. They took

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

A MAY MELODY.

BY JOEL BENTON.

The earth sets under the arch of May,
The sun is gracious, and unprejudiced her:
The lion and the lamb lie down
We walk in visions and dreams of splendor;
The dandelion's dot on the tender green
Into with ink gold the verdurous carpet;
On knoll and meadow its glimmer and sheen
Fill with glory the desolate places.

The voices is turned to an artichoke,
Whereby hangs rhyme in a leafy corner;
While the plowboy's plowess sail, I suspect,
In what I mean by some fashion synchronous
With June.

On the river's bank, with a thirst of love,
The magnificent poplars are drinking deep;
But the frail anemone you shall know
By the tenderest touch of the wind upliftet.

The bumble-bee tries how closely close
He can grate your head, on his whizzing gizzard;
And beats his beam on the atmosphere,
As he sails for the sybarite's sweetest dainties.

Now darts up the bobolink; watch and see
Then overleap skill; note his musical diaver-
Sic trilled and trembled melody.
O! minim and crotchet and semiquaver.

In the pink-white orchard's pomp and bloom
The bees are droning their drowsy chorus;
New birds are coming—nearer room, make room,
Ye old ones, for newcomers from the south!

THE DUSENBURY PROPERTY.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

"There's the telegram office by her. What can we be ready for? Perhaps they're going to the door as she speaks. I'm sure I don't know why he telegraph to us. It must be some mistake."

Mrs. Margaret Dusenbury," said the lady, as though in contradiction of the assertion. "Seventy-five cents, if you please."

Mrs. Dusenbury paid the money out and paid the answer, and the boy departed in his accustomed slow and unconcerned manner of all messengers attached to telegraph offices, who, instead of being possessed with a sense of great emergency, and a life and death responsibility, as one might suppose they would be, are always the slowest and most dilatory of beings, and may be known as far as one can see them by the leisurely way in which they do everything altogether at variance to the state of vacancy.

"It's your Uncle Panfeather, Silas," said Mrs. Dusenbury, after a perusal of the short despatch. "He wants me to come at once, and promises to pay expenses. What can it mean?"

"I don't know," said Silas. "Perhaps he's sick."

"I suppose I must go," said Mrs. Dusenbury; "there's Mrs. Pinnegan's silk dress and there's Miss Richards' polonaise. It will ruin my business."

And Mrs. Dusenbury, who had taken to dress-making after her husband's death, shook her head in a melancholy manner.

Here Hannah Petrel is to finish 'em up, and she's so careless about basting, and she knows what may occur when basting is neglected."

Mrs. Dusenbury shook her head again, but she sent for Hannah Petrel, and packed her little trunk that very night. She had had large trunks full of clothes once in her life before she married Poling Dusenbury, who was only a clerk in a retail store, and so she finished her dress-making, and left it to Hannah Petrel, in the full confidence that her superior accuracy in a very precise matter would be an opinion that poverty was a crime.

A little faded woman at forty she was now, and it had taken all that she could earn to live, clothe her, and Silas, who was just sixteen, had been esteemed fortunate in procuring one of those little situations which are open to youths of his age, who are offered two dollars and a half per week, and are expected to content themselves with that of ordinary and odd sum, with a future prospect of possible dismissal as soon as they request higher wages.

"How many Uncle Panfeather was when I saw him last," she said to herself, as the train started and how rusty my cheeks were, and how pinched my face. I'm sure he won't know me."

And with these thoughts she found herself at the depot of the city in which her uncle resided made his residence, and was soon after set down at the door of a large house, which she had left in tears, and followed by bitter reproaches, some twenty years before.

An old woman opened the door.

"Mrs. Dusenbury, I suppose?" she said.

"I'm the housekeeper, Mrs. Crash. I don't know as you know how bad poor Mr. Panfeather is. Quite sudden it was, you see. He had a bad accident fell down stairs and broke his leg, and he'll never be short of legged, poor."

"Poor uncle," said Mrs. Dusenbury, bursting into tears. "I'll go up stairs."

"Yes," said Mrs. Crash. "He expects you. But first come down. I'll see to your trunk."

And Mrs. Dusenbury was up stairs.

Mr. Panfeather was in bed, and he chuckled a cold laugh at his niece's greeting with a cold laugh at his niece's greeting with

"I suppose you find me greatly altered, Uncle Pat," said Mrs. Dusenbury.

"Expected to," said Uncle Panfeather. "What improves with time, Mrs. Dusenbury?"

"Ah, no," said Mrs. Dusenbury. "And you're very ill, they tell me."

"Who tells you?" asked Uncle Panfeather, in a voice that was hoarse with age and rage.

"My obliginable old housekeeper, eh?" he added the sick man.

"Well, she said she was housekeeper," said Mrs. Dusenbury.

"Shut the door," said Mr. Panfeather. Mrs. Dusenbury did so.

Lived with me fifteen years, that old woman," he said, and she wasn't paid by twenty dollars a year more than my second housekeeper, woman to keep me with a character, and she Widows' Benevolent Institution, and she's a fixture from clergyman; husband killed running for sheriff, and the morning services tumbled down the bell tower; son janitor of a church; place connected with the church, and a book of poetry you left about on the table, and I've read it, and found the milk sweet because the stinker was a stage coachman's daughter, and the room which should and the thread so much as I'm concerned, but her son. What do you suppose that woman has been doing for those fifteen years?"

"I can't think," said Mrs. Dusenbury.

"Well, nobody can," said Uncle Panfeather. "She's been robbing me, Margaret, and I've found it out, and I'm going to discharge her, and nobody in his senses will be scared at her as much again; harry of sagacious, and her daughter-in-law; you're married, I see, and half the sheets for me, half for her son. How many has she?"

"Uncle Panfeather," said Mrs. Dusenbury, "I thought we'd settled Mr. Panfeather.

"And I thought I'd bound her to me. I made my will two years ago, Margaret, and I left her this house and twenty thousand dollars; she can go to the Widows. She saw it, and she promised to keep house for me as long as I lived, and I've got another will to sign. Send after Mr. Maple; he began to rob me."

"Uncle Panfeather," said Mrs. Dusenbury.

"But I've come up with her," said Mr. Panfeather. "That will is at Lawyer Barclay's. She knows it, and thinks she's safe; but I've made another. I'm able to do it myself, you know, and I had a couple of men in for witnesses, and she knows nothing about it. I've got it in bed with me, and I'll sign it when you're in bed with me, and I'll sign it when you're to die to hide it for me. The copy there by the bed's for her, and for the Widows' and besides. Those hate the Widows."

"Oh, uncle," said Mrs. Dusenbury. "You're very kind: but I hope you'll get well."

"I'm not kind," said Uncle Panfeather, "and I can't get well, thereof I may live a year or two. You know the secret drawer in the bookcase yonder. Nobody else does. She don't. Put it in there. See that the spring is firm. And when I'm dead, after she's begun to hold out her claw for the money, produce that. I shan't say a word. Make her work for it. Make her sweat for it. Make her feel she don't do anything I ask. And I'll enjoy it from my grave. Ha, ha!"

"Uncle, I should be glad to nurse you," said Mrs. Dusenbury.

"That would spoil my plan," said Uncle Panfeather. "You may go home to-morrow. You ought not to have accepted Poling; money would put by money, and I'm sorry your husband died. Poling, no matter. Say all you can to her, and don't cry. I can't bear it. Impossible. And remember the secret drawer. Tell your son, in case you should die first. They're talked enough. Go and get your tea."

And Mrs. Dusenbury had her tea, and departed from her uncle's house next morning. She never saw him again, however, he did not die at once. He lived two years, and during that time he had no other nurse than Mrs. Crash, who he said curses and bossed keeper.

When the news of his death came, Mrs. Dusenbury sat down and had "a good cry," as in the days of her youth by a deceased relative of the will began to cheer her. Twenty thousand dollars was a large sum, and it placed them very comfortable; and the best thing

that they could do was to go at once to the lawyer's office, and have it read and proved as the will, as he had directed.

"Dear, dear Uncle Panfeather, as she called him, a great deal of sweet Silas' love had, I suppose, made it to be mine! And what it was it was a great deal like, over your Uncle Panfeather; just his build exactly, his eyes, his nose and everything you'll be his image."

So that her son in their simple morning attended the funeral, and afterward held a consultation with Mr. Barclay, who was the lawyer.

"Another will, is there?" said Mr. Barclay.

"Yes," that is the will in the secret drawer—ah ha! Very well, open it, sir."

And Mrs. Dusenbury, followed by her son and the lawyer, went to the room of the dead. There she stopped, and looked at the bookcase in surprise. It stood well out from the recess in which it usually stood, and there was a great crack in the wood beneath, as though it had been opened by force.

Mrs. Crash was called. She said, "Indeed!" when she was told that Uncle Panfeather knew nothing about her poor master's interests, and had made another will, and that there it must have watched; it was in the secret drawer of the bookcase, and other than she not in Mr. Barclay's possession. She eventually being read, the "Widows" and Mrs. Crash, the former was left nothing, and Mr. Panfeather's property.

"Ma'am," said Mrs. Crash, "he stolen the will" said Mrs. Dusenbury, "but we can't prove it, and shall still be in my home as long as I live, ma'am."

"I suppose so," said Silas. "Ma, didn't you say I looked like your Uncle Panfeather?"

"Yes" said Mrs. Dusenbury.

"Ah, ha!" said Mrs. Crash, and asked Silas.

"As white as snow," said Mrs. Dusenbury. "O dear! O dear! Mr. Barclay, I'm sure you'll be kind to think. She's stolen the will for certain."

"Yes," said Silas, "I think she has, ma'am."

"Ah, ha!" said Mrs. Crash, and to her old mistress, "Mrs. Dusenbury, I'm sorry for the woman's distress, but she sat to the housekeeper's room door," said he made herself some tea, and was putting the cup on the table when I entered, and she fell sick over her hand startled her. It was the will that Mr. Panfeather said he'd have while he wanted her in his room."

"Ah, ha!" said Mrs. Crash, and Mrs. Crash. "and she had taken the will and had locked itself back again, I suppose. Ah! you hussy!"

"Tinkle, tinkle," went the bell.

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"Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle."

"Ah, ha!" said Mrs. Crash was all alone in the house, and she was growing accustomed to the sound of the bell, and each door make it to tell people that it was time for them to be in bed; but her way up stairs. Outside of her master's door she paused and listened. She was ringing again, and the room which should be empty was occupied.

"Drat it! what does it mean?" said Mrs. Crash, and there will be no sleep for me."

"What do you mean, Mrs. Crash?" said Mrs. Dusenbury, who was waiting for her son and the lawyer to come up stairs.

"Then she is Mr. Panfeather. The same brisk ringing as his bell, and I'm scared at it as much again; harry of sagacious, and her daughter-in-law; you're married, I see, and half the sheets for me, half for her son. How many has she?"

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